

Message Text

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TAGS: PINS, NU
SUBJECT: CHAMORRO ASSASSINATION INVESTIGATION UPDATE

SUMMARY: THE FIVE PERSONS ARRESTED FOR THE ASSASSINATION OF PEDRO JOAQUIN CHAMORRO AND U.S. CITIZEN DR. PEDRO RAMOS WERE FORMALLY CHARGED WITH ASSASSINATION AND ASSOCIATION IN CRIMINAL ACTIVITY ON JANUARY 25. THE POSSIBILITY FOR A FULL AND BELIEVABLE INVESTIGATION MAY BE LIMITED BECAUSE OF DR. RAMOS' UNAVAILABILITY FOR INTERROGATION AND THE LIKELIHOOD HE WOULD CONTINUE TO DENY ANY INVOLVEMENT. END SUMMARY

1. EMBASSY HAS SENT THE FOLLOWING REPLY TO CONGRESSMAN HARRINGTON ON THE INVESTIGATION:

"THANK YOU FTC YOUR LETTER OF JANUARY 11, 1978 CONCERNING THE INVESTIGATION OF THE CHAMORRO ASSASSINATION. YOU MAY BE SURE THAT BECAUSE WE KNEW PEDRO JOAQUIN AND ESTEEMED HIM, WE FEEL A PERSONAL LOSS WHICH MAKES UP PARTICULARLY CONCERNED WITH THE INVESTIGATION.

"APPARENTLY, THE PERSONS INVOLVED IN CARRYING OUT THE CRIME HAVE BEEN CAPTURED. THEY HAVE CONFESSED. THE PERSON WHO RECRUITED THE ASSASSINS IS THE ONLY ONE WHO APPEARS TO BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY THE AUTHOR(S) OF THE CRIME. HE STATES THAT HE RECEIVED MONEY FROM DR. PEDRO RAMOS, A U.S. CITIZEN WHO OPERATED A BOOD PLASMA ENTERPRISE IN MANAGUA WHICH WAS UNDER ATTACK IN CHAMORRO'S NEWSPAPER. HE
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STATES THAT RAMOS TOLD HIM OTHER PROMINENT NICARAGUANS WERE ALSO INVOLVED.

"THERE ARE SEVERAL ALLEGATIONS AGAINST DR. RAMOS, WHO FROM MIAMI HAS DENIED ANY INVOLVEMENT IN THE ASSASSINATION. ALL OF THE NAMED PERSONS WHO HAVE BEEN CONTACTED FOR COMMENT HAVE DENIED ANY INVOLVEMENT.

" WE WILL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THE INVESTIGATION VERY CLOSELY, BUT RE-

GRET TO SAY THE POSSIBILITY OF SIGNIFICANT NEW DEVELOPMENTS DOES NOT
APPEAR VERY GREAT AT THIS TIME. SHOULD ANY ARISE YOU MAY BE SURE
WE WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED."

2. THE RECRUITER OF THE ASSASSINATION TEAM IS SILVIO PENA RIVAS. THE
TESTIMONY HE GAVE IS THAT RAMOS GAVE HIM 600,000 CORDOBAS FOR THE
ASSASSINATION. PENA FURTHER STATES RAMOS TOLD HIM PART OF THE PAY-
MENT (ONE-THIRD EACH) CAME FROM DR. CORNELIO HUECK (PRESIDENT OF THE
CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES) AND FAUSTO ZELAYA (UNTIL DECEMBER HEAD OF THE
HOUSING BANK). A SECRETARY AT PLASMAPHERESIS, THE BLOOD PLASMA
ENTERPRISE RUN BY DR. RAMOS, TESTIFIED THAT PENA HAD VISITED PLAS-
MAPHERESIS LOOKING FOR DR. RAMOS, WHO WAS OUT OF THE COUNTRY, AND
THAT A CUBAN-AMERICAN EMPLOYEE OF PLASMAPHERESIS NAMED JUAN ALVAREZ
GAVE PENA AN ENVELOPE WITH OVER 25,000 CORDOBAS. THEN, ACCORDING TO
THE SECRETARY, PENA ASKED HER TO TELL RAMOS THAT HE (RAMOS) HAD TO
GIVEN HIM THE REST OF THE MONEY WITHIN TWO DAYS. THIS TESTIMONY,
AS WELLAS TESTIMONY BY EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT STORE WHERE PENA
WORKED AT THE TIME THAT THEY HAD SEEN PENA AND RAMOS TOGETHER, CON-
TRADICTS RAMOS' STATEMENT THAT HE DID NOT KNOW PENA.

3. SUGGESTED RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS:

Q. WHAT IS THE VIEW OF THE US OF THE INVESTIGATION IN NICARAGUA OF
THE ASSASSINATION OF DR. PEDRO JOAQUIN CHAMORRO?

A. THE HEARINGS HAVE BEEN OPEN TO THE PRESS AND HEAVILY COVERED IN
ALL MEDIA. PEOPLE MAY FORM THEIR OWN OPINIONS BASED ON THE TESTI-
MONEY. HOWEVER, THE RECORD IS CONFUSING BECAUSE OF THE CONTRADIC-
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TIONS IN THE TESTIMONY. IT IS CLEAR THAT ONLY THE PERSONS ACTUALLY
INVOLVED IN THE ASSASSINATION AND NOT THE AUTHOR OR AUTHORS OF THE
CRIME HAVE BEEN APPREHENDED.

Q. ISN'T ONE OF THE PERSONS CHARGED WITH THE ASSASSINATION AN AMER-
ICAN CITIZEN WHO IS IN THE U.S.?

A. I UNDERSTAND THAT TESTIMONY IMPLICATED AN AMERICAN CITIZEN WHO
HAD A BUSINESS IN NICARAGUA, THAT THE NICARAGUAN JUDGE HAS JUST MADE
CHARGES AGAINST THIS PERSON, AND THAT HE IS IN THE U.S. AT PRESENT.

Q. WOULD THE U.S. EXTRADITE THIS PERSON TO NICARAGUA IF A REQUEST
CAME FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF NICARAGUA?

A. THIS IS A LEGAL QUESTION WHICH I COULD NOT RESPOND TO HYPOTHE-
TICALLY.

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